



TREASURER'S OFFICE
Washington County Office Building

February 24, 2025

Memorandum for: The Honorable House Ways and Means Committee, Maryland General Assembly

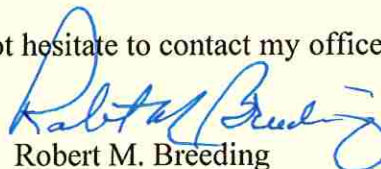
Subject: House Bill 1372, Notice of Tax Sale - Alterations

Dear Committee Members,

As the Treasurer of Washington County Maryland, I seek your support to amend the legal annual tax sale requirement to a more effective means. To not waste your valuable time, below you will find a summary of the reasons for this amendment:

- The annual tax sale legal notice in Washington County is \$150.00 per parcel. That cost is paid by the property owner at the time of redemption. In St. Mary's County the cost is \$28.00.
- The very vast amount of real estate property parcels that go to tax sale are a result of the customer just not having the ability to pay.
- My staff and I take countless calls during tax sale season while Washington County's Administration does not. It is not uncommon to take calls from our customers in tears to lose their home.
- After studying the return on the investment from newspaper advertising, I have found there is little.
- While the Maryland Tax-Property Article only requires one reminder notice and one final legal notice prior to the tax sale, it is the established policy of my office to send three reminder notices and one final legal notice. The cost of the additional mailings is done at the expense of my office's budget and not by the property owner.
- While not required by law, my office also posts the tax-sale-at-risk-parcels on Washington County's website. HB 1372 seeks to codify that practice to help ensure a timely notification if my successor seeks to change our internal policy.
- In partnership with the State's Tax Ombudsmen, I seek every opportunity to ensure my customers are notified of potential tax-sale as well, I seek to reduce their cost with an end-state of making redemption more possible.
- Last year I sought and received an increase in a mileage reimbursement increase in my office's budget. My purpose was to drive to the homes or try to locate the owner's at-risk-properties of a potential tax sale.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office on 240-313-2110.


Robert M. Breeding
Treasurer

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